

Pamela truly has been dedicated to the Saratoga community. She embodies the North Country spirit of neighbor helping neighbor, always quick to lend a hand. On behalf of New York's 21st Congressional District, I would like to thank Pamela for her contributions to the community and congratulate her on reaching this important milestone. I join many folks in our community in wishing her well in this next chapter of her life.

HONORING FIREFIGHTER BRANDY
RINGLER

HON. JOHN JOYCE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2021

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Firefighter Brandy Ringler for her 5 years of service with the Meyersdale Volunteer Fire Department in Somerset County, Pennsylvania.

Firefighters' commitment and service to our community are invaluable. Volunteer firefighters often are called on to respond to emergencies of all types. From battling structure fires to conducting search and rescue operations, volunteer firefighters respond immediately whenever disaster strikes. These heroes often go above and beyond—they teach first aid, educate students about fire and other dangerous hazards, and even install car safety seats for children. Through their diverse and often-difficult work, volunteer firefighters provide lifesaving services and are a staple of our local community.

Firefighter Ringler has worked throughout her career to serve the people of Somerset County. On behalf of Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, I thank her for her work to protect life and property in our community and wish her continued health, safety, and success.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MS. KAO
LY ILEAN HER

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2021

Ms. McCOLLUM. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life of Ms. Kao Ly Ilean Her, a Hmong-American leader and University of Minnesota Board of Regent who died on May 13 at age 52 of COVID-19. Ms. Her was a tremendous advocate and a connector for our community and the State of Minnesota. Her passing is a loss that is felt deeply throughout Saint Paul and our state.

A refugee who fled war-torn Laos as a young girl in 1976, Ms. Her and her family arrived in the United States and eventually made Minnesota their new home. She excelled at academics, graduating from Hamline University and earning her Juris Doctorate from the University of Minnesota Law School and becoming the first Hmong woman to be admitted to the Minnesota State Bar Association. In 2019, she was the first Hmong-American elected to the University of Minnesota Board of Regents by the Minnesota Legislature.

Ms. Her put her natural leadership skills to use for others early on—founding several non-profit organizations, promoting the empowerment of women and girls and supporting our community in many other ways. She was especially dedicated to efforts supporting youth, respecting elders and advocating for the arts that enrich and sustain us.

It was a privilege to work closely with Ms. Her throughout the time I've served in congress, and to experience her energy and optimism for building a bright future for herself and others. During her service as executive director of the Minnesota Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans in the early 2000s, she reached out to my office and volunteered to help lead the successful state efforts to resettle Hmong refugees arriving from Thailand. Her work to help these new Americans transition to life here were invaluable as they reconnected with family members, established new homes and quickly contributed to the economic and cultural vitality of our community.

Ms. Her understood the innate importance of family and the power that neighbors have in working together for the common good. Her ability to connect community members and empower others has spurred new leaders in the Hmong-American community and throughout our state. Her own path in life inspires a vision for others to believe in themselves and determine their own futures.

My condolences are with Ms. Her's beloved family and many friends. Madam Speaker, please join me in tribute to Kao Ly Ilean Her for her remarkable life of service and leadership for others.